

159 Toma the headman, sometimes known as Male Toma, an
 [55] honorary name, sometimes known as Toma the Short, so-
 called because of his stocky build, was a famous person, and
 once had been a serf. He was born of serf parents at Gam,
 and as a boy had worked for the Chuanas, drawing their wa-
 ter and herding their cattle and goats.

672 When Toma was a boy, his father was murdered by a
 682 child, the result of a terrible accident which took place one
 159 day when Toma's father was arguing with the father of a
 boy named Gao. Gao, who couldn't have been more than ten
 years old, became upset and angry when he heard his fa-
 ther quarreling and, taking his father's weapons, shot Toma's
 father in the chest with a poisoned arrow. The old man was
 helped to the shade, the arrow was drawn out and the wound
 sucked, but as there is no antidote for arrow poison the old
 man lived only for the rest of the day and by night he was
 dead.

Oddly enough, the crime was connected with the old man
 and not with Gao, the young murderer, for ever after that
 day the old man was referred to as Tsamko Bone Arrow,
 [55] while Gao in later years became known as Gao Wild Pig,
 after a pig he had killed which was in some way remarkable.

159 Toma flourished as a young man and became an excellent
 hunter with tireless legs, tireless eyes, and a deadly aim, and
 it was said of him that he never returned from a hunt with-
 out having killed at least a wildebeest, if not something larger.
 Hence, the people connected with him ate a great deal of
 meat and his popularity grew. He once said of himself: "From
 the day I was born I was born for meat."

159 When Toma was in his late teens, some say, his powers
 622 in hunting attracted the attention of the headman of Gau-
 591 tscha Pan, who offered Toma the hand of his daughter, Tu,
 in marriage. Toma accepted, went to live with his wife's peo-

372 by him by means of the *hei-doros*. The new */ou-ais* now serves to
 622 supply the other members of the group. At times it may happen that
 all the members of the community may not be living in the *//gaus*
 361 (camp), but in some outside werft. This is usually the case only in
 221 times of drought when the game has moved far afield and great
 • 672 difficulty is being experienced in obtaining veldkos. Further, people
 622 driven out by another group and seeking protection are sometimes
 allowed to live some distance away from the *//gaus*. Such communities
 are not allowed to make their own fire or to obtain it from any other
 source, but the */ou-ais* of the *gei-khoib* in whose territory they are living.
 622 "Persistent ill-health among the members of the community or diffi-
 372 culty in obtaining veldkos or want of luck in the chase may cause the
gei-khoib, either of his own accord or after consultation with his people,
 to proclaim that it is necessary to make a new fire. In such an event
 all fires, including the */ou-ais*, are extinguished by being covered
 over with ashes. The *gei-khoib* at the same time notifies all outside
 camps of his decision and the latter likewise extinguish their fires.
 He then kindles a new */ou-ais* in front of his hut with the *hei-doros*
 and applies */norab* and *dabas* in the manner described above. The new
 fire is not made on the same spot as the old fire, but a few feet away
 from the place on which it has been."

114 "The custom of kindling and maintaining a perpetual fire,"
 372 Fourie goes on to say, "is met with among all the organized primitive
 622 groups" of Bushmen in South-West Africa. The only previous
 information hinting at observances of this kind is found in a curt state-
 ment by Kaufmann that among the Auen the "captain" of a village
 sees to it that the fire does not go out. But he adds that there is no
 "sacred" fire, and attributes the guarding of the fire against extinction
 to the practical inconveniences of the method employed in making it.¹
 Quite recently, however, Lebzelter has reported the occurrence of
 similar observances among the Kung, although his remarks on the
 subject are very scanty. He states merely that the Kung, like the
 Bergdama, have the sacred fire round which only the men may sit.
 "When the camp is moved," he concludes, "the head of the group
 takes with him a brand from this fire"²—presumably to use it for

¹ Kaufmann, op. cit., 139; "Der 'Kapitän' (Aichab) der Werft achtet darauf, dass das Feuer nicht ausgeht. Ein 'heiliges' Feuer ist nicht vorhanden. Die Bewahrung des Feuers vor dem Verlöschen geschieht lediglich aus praktischen Gründe, da das Feuerquirren immerhin ziemlich anstrengend ist."

² "Bei den !Kuh-Buschleuten," 14: "Wie die Honigkaffern haben auch die !Kuh das Sochafeuer. Es ist dies das heilige Feuer, bei dem nur die Männer sein dürfen. Wenn die Werft übersiedelt, dann nimmt das Werftoberhaupt einen Feuerbrand mit Sochafeuer mit."